

# Internationalization of Higher Education: Navigating Between Contrasting Trends

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## 1 Introduction

The internationalization of higher education in the last decades reigns highly on the agendas of higher education systems worldwide. Universities in Europe, as well as in other regions, are expected to become key players in a global knowledge network. Higher education institutions are challenged today to move from operating mainly within state systems to an international arena. As a matter of fact, the medieval universities which were established in Europe since the 11th century were quite international in their nature. Medieval scholars communicated in Latin and often studied and taught at several universities in different countries of Europe. However, since the emergence of the nation states in the 19th century, universities served mainly nationalist ideas and interests. Each university has worked hard to establish its reputation and standing, mainly in the national context of its operation.

Some profound changes in the last decades have affected higher education systems all over the world due to the development of a global knowledge economy, the immense widening of access to higher education, continuous cuts of higher education budgets by governments, the emergence of the digital technologies, and the inter-connectedness of the world. All of these phenomena have affected various aspects of the traditional roles of universities and other higher education institutions at international, national and institutional levels. Operating in an international higher education setting has a crucial impact on shaping the missions, strategic planning and operational practices of higher education institutions in the current global society.

This paper examines five pairs of contrasting trends along which higher education systems, as well as individual higher education institutions, have to navigate in defining their missions and in shaping their operational strategies: serving

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national priorities versus operating within an international setting; government steering versus institutional autonomy; increased diversity versus harmonization policies; competition versus collaboration; and intellectual property versus intellectual philanthropy. On the continuum of these five contrasting trends, each higher education institution has to define today its functioning in its national context and in the international higher education network.

## 2 Serving National Priorities Versus Operating in an International Setting

Higher education systems, as well as individual higher education institutions, are required today to find the delicate equilibrium between being attentive to national priorities and local needs and, at the same time, adjusting to operating in an international setting. Internationalization and globalization are perceived as a key reality in the 21st century, influencing profoundly higher education (Altbach et al. 2009; Altbach and Reisberg 2013; de Wit and Hunter 2014; Guri-Rosenblit 2011, 2013; International Association of Universities 2012; Peterson 2014). Some scholars claim that the process of globalization “is a force more powerful than industrialization, urbanization, and secularization combined” (Douglass et al. 2009, 7). Some go so far as to claim that the globalization process will give birth to a new grand model of a ‘global university’. In his book on *The American Research University from World War II to World Wide Web*, Charles Vest, a former president of MIT, predicted that: “A global meta-university is arising that will accurately characterize higher education a decade or two hence in much the same way that Clark Kerr’s multiversity accurately characterized American research universities forty years ago” (Vest 2007, 108). A relatively recent position paper of the International Association of Universities stated that: “Globalization is now the most important contextual factor shaping the internationalization of higher education... Irrespective of contextual differences within and between countries, nearly all higher education institutions worldwide are engaged in international activities and are seeking to expand them” (International Association of Universities 2012, 1, 2).

At the national level, an important challenge for policy makers is to decide to what extent are they investing in strengthening a small number of universities to become world-class-universities. The emergence of a super model of world-class-universities constitutes a remarkable manifestation of the impact of internationalization in higher education (Altbach and Balan 2007). Many governments around the world are obsessed at present with establishing world-class-universities, dominated currently by leading research universities from the US, and a handful of universities in the UK and a few other countries. Germany had allocated in the last decade substantial resources to some key institutions to become the ‘Harvard on the Rhine’ (Guri-Rosenblit 2013). Japan had funded competitive grants to create centres of excellence in its leading research

universities. China has placed emphasis on creating world-class research universities. India, South Korea, Chile, Taiwan and elsewhere try to enhance standards of their mainstream research universities (Altbach 2013).

In the effort to create leading world-class-universities, policy makers at the national system level tend to prioritize a small number of institutions in order to improve their country's position in the rankings, often at the expense of the rest of the country's higher education system. International university rankings have become a familiar character of the higher education scene in the last two decades (Altbach et al. 2009; Altbach and Balan 2007; Kehm and Stensaker 2009; Millot 2014; OECD 2012).

Interestingly, though the effort to create and strengthen world-class-universities is conducted mainly by governments, most of the leading ranking tables focus mainly on individual institutions to be found in a small cluster of countries. Thus, university ranking that focuses on indicators such as research, publications and international reputation does not relate to the vast majority of institutions worldwide that cannot compete on the same playing field as world-class-universities. Millot (2014) argues that, in order to counter this perverse effect, attempts are being made in the last years to measure, rank, and compare national higher education systems, rather than individual institutions. Universitas 21, led by the University of Melbourne, constitutes an interesting example of comparing and ranking national higher education systems. Universitas 21 uses 22 measures grouped into four categories: resources, environment, connectivity, and outputs. The multiple measures provide a comprehensive view of the most important facets of higher education systems, including the roles and status of the top universities in each higher education system. However, the effort to compare national higher education systems is still in a nascent stage.

Obviously, in any given national higher education system, some universities are much more generously endowed and equipped to serve a broader range of functions in an international context, beyond the needs of their particular environment and society, while many others need to concentrate first and foremost on the present and future knowledge needs of their own communities, and develop their special loci of expertise (Guri-Rosenblit 2011; Ordorika 2006; Weiler et al. 2006).

Altbach (2013) argues that it is of tremendous importance to develop leading research universities, even in developing countries. There are usually few research universities in most national higher education systems, but they constitute a crucial part of any academic system, which, by its very nature, is most heterogeneous and includes different types of higher education institutions. Research universities in low and middle-income countries have crucial roles to play in making it possible for their countries to join the global knowledge society and compete in sophisticated knowledge economies. While research universities in the developing world have not yet achieved the top levels of global rankings, they are extraordinarily important in their countries and regions. Altbach claims that all countries need academic institutions linked to the global academic system of science and scholarship, so that they can understand advanced scientific developments and participate selectively in global science. Most countries can afford to support at least one university of

sufficient quality to participate in international discussions of science and scholarship, and conduct research in fields relevant to national development.

In addition to the trend of fostering world-class-universities, changing recruitment markets for students and faculty reflect one of the major shifts in higher education policies in the last decades. Many universities worldwide have developed an array of strategies to benefit from the international environment and attract non-resident students. The outreach of universities to international student clienteles could be activated at different levels, ranging from enrolling individual students from different countries, through collaborative ventures with other institutions (universities or business enterprises), to cooperative undertakings with governments, international corporations and intergovernmental organizations. The phenomenon of recruitment agents that are hired on a commission basis to recruit potential students has existed for decades in the UK and Australia. It is practiced currently on a growing scale also by the US and continental Europe, that aim to recruit mainly students in countries like India and China. The operation of such agents, and the ethical problems which such an operation entails, are subject to lively debates in the relevant higher education literature (Altbach and Reisberg 2013).

Transnational education is one of the potent manifestations of the impact of internationalization upon higher education (Altbach et al. 2009; Becker 2010; Bischof 2014; International Association of Universities 2012; Li 2014; Naidoo 2010; Witte 2010). The discourse on transnational education in the higher education literature is characterized by an ambiguous and complex terminology related to a plethora of manifestations of the mobility of students, academic staff, academic programs, and collaborative ventures in teaching and research. The terminology relates to a long list of terms, such as 'cross-border delivery', 'student mobility', 'credit mobility', 'articulation programs', 'franchises', 'joint and double degrees', 'off-shore provision', etc.

The number of transnational students worldwide, that either study abroad towards academic degrees or study within extensions or branch campuses of foreign universities in their own national jurisdiction, has increased dramatically in the last decade. US is the leader in setting branch campuses, followed by Australia, the United Kingdom, France and India. Among the host countries, the United Arab Emirates is a clear leader, hosting 40 international branch campuses (Witte 2010). China is in the second position among host countries, followed by Singapore and Qatar. The host countries have recruited prestigious foreign universities to establish local campuses, with the goal of expanding access for the local student population and serving higher education 'hubs' for their regions. Leading research universities, such as Cornell University, NYU, Texas A&M University and Carnegie Mellon, are responsible for operating professional schools in computer sciences, engineering, medicine, business administration, etc. Approximately three million students are studying nowadays outside their home countries. Estimates predict the rise to eight million international students by 2020 (Altbach and Reisberg 2013).

The mobility of international students is currently an important policy issue over the world. The UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand use a point system for

evaluating merits of immigrant applicants (Li 2014). Bischof claims that so far many countries, including European countries, offering cross-border higher education, do not have a clear policy and well-defined regulations related to franchising, validation and branch campuses. Bischof argues that the European higher education area with guaranteed recognition of degrees needs corresponding mechanisms of transparency and quality assurance related to cross-border offering of higher education programs by European countries. Such a quality assurance framework should include a joint European register of recognized, quality assurance higher education institutions and programs.

Commonly agreed upon standards and a white list of institutions adhering to them would help to ensure transparency and develop trust in cross-border education provided within the European higher education area (Bischof 2014).

Many activities carried on today in the direction of the internationalization of higher education have not addressed possible adverse consequences entailed in the internationalization process (International Association of Universities 2012). It is of tremendous importance that the leaders of higher education systems, as well as of individual higher education institutions, should define clearly their missions and operational goals on the continuum of the contrasting trends of serving national priorities versus operating in an international setting.

### **3 Government Steering Versus Institutional Autonomy**

Government steering in many higher education systems has grown significantly in the last decades. In many countries, universities and other higher education institutions are subjected nowadays, more than ever before, to stringent quality control mechanisms and accountability measures. Many higher education systems worldwide are currently operating by mechanisms of incentives and sanctions imposed top-down by government steering and regulations. It is generally assumed that these mechanisms help to increase the efficiency of the operation of higher education institutions. On the other hand, governments encourage universities to mobilize alternative funds through operation beyond national boundaries, and enhance universities' leaders to think out of the box and find resourceful ways to operate in the international higher education market. In this sense, they are promoting institutional autonomy which might, in the long run, result in weakening the national affiliation of universities (Guri-Rosenblit 2011, 2013).

As a result of shrinking budgets, the funding of higher education institutions has become increasingly based on mixed sources. Institutions were forced, by the stagnation or decrease of public funding, to identify new resources or to develop resources neglected up till then (Guri-Rosenblit 2011; Teichler 2009). Such resources include the induction or raise of tuition, search for fee-paying international students, sale of research products and other services to the corporate world or to the public.

Though there is still a handful of countries (mainly in Europe), in which tuition for higher education is free in the public higher education sector, in many countries tuition fees were introduced where they did not exist before, and increased where they have already existed. Tuition fees have been introduced or greatly increased in Spain, the Netherlands, and Ireland in the 1980s, Portugal, Italy, the United Kingdom, Austria in the 1990s, not to mention the Central and Eastern European countries, in which they were introduced nearly everywhere. Also, outside Europe, the general tendency has been to raise tuition fees, particularly in Latin America, China and India. Moreover, many for-profit private providers of higher education have emerged in the last decades in many countries, charging high tuition fees, particularly in highly demanded fields of study.

The search for fee-paying students constitutes a leading reason for greater cross-border activity and transnational education. Institutions and governments in countries with well-developed higher education are creating initiatives to receive students from many developing countries or to establish branches and other off-shore operations beyond national boundaries, as aforementioned. Some universities in less-developed higher education systems seek relationships with other institutions which they view as more prestigious, to increase their chances of a higher reputation in global rankings.

In addition to raising tuition fees and expanding the fee-paying student clientele, universities and other higher education institutions are constantly looking for additional resources to budget their ongoing operations. The sale of services, whether or not they are directly bound to the research or educational activity of the institution, increasingly represents part of the resources of higher education institutions. For the North American universities, it represents about 20 % of their resources, irrespective of whether the institutions are private or public ones (Altbach and Reisberg 2013). A growing number of universities have created in the last decades new entities that are intended to act as interfaces with the economic and social environment. These entities are professionally managed, according to a commercial logic similar to that of corporations with which they are in contact. They are charged with the marketing of research results, and of translating the technological or experimental activities into practical applications. This activity that generates supplementary financial resources also fuels the teaching and research sectors related to the traditional missions of these institutions (Guri-Rosenblit 2011).

It is important to note that some of the entrepreneurial activities of higher education institutions nowadays are not geared only to diversifying and increasing their budgets. Many higher education institutions are developing today broader internationalization strategies, to seek cooperative agreements that define themselves as global institutions. By the internationalization strategies they pursue a variety of goals—to enrich their academic programs, enlarge the knowledge and experience base for their students, host a more internationally diverse student body and faculty, provide more opportunities for their faculty to join international research networks and ultimately to develop a wide spectrum of joint activity that

will benefit all participating parties (Altbach 2014; Guri-Rosenblit 2011, 2013; Peterson 2014).

Peterson highlights an interesting pattern related to higher education international activities. Peterson claims that as we have entered a period of accelerated international engagement, country-to-country educational diplomacy is being overtaken by institution-to-institution relationships. While governments may view university cross-border activity as an important part of their diplomatic efforts, institutions are increasingly operating beyond sovereignty, based on their own strategies and motivations (Peterson 2014).

The Fulbright program sponsored by the US Department of State is an excellent example of public diplomacy furthered by policy makers at the national level of higher education. The principal goal of the Fulbright program has been to foster mutual understanding between people and nations. So far, it claims the largest movement of students and scholars across the world that any nation has sponsored. Also, the British Council constitutes a good example of national academic international diplomacy. With offices around the world, the British Council describes itself as the United Kingdom's international organization for educational opportunities and cultural relations. China decided to embark on such an activity since 2004. Its Confucius Institutes are designed to promote Chinese language and culture abroad. By 2011, there were 353 Confucius Institutes in 104 countries and regions (Peterson 2014, 2).

Many state-to-state relationships are replaced today by institution-to-institution collaborative ventures. The international operation of universities has shifted from being a marginal activity to a mainstream operation, no longer located exclusively in the international offices, but an integral part of university strategy. Institutions sometimes deal directly, not merely with other institutions in other countries, but with governments themselves. For instance, when the presidents of American universities travel to India, China, or any number of other countries, they often meet with government officials as part of their efforts to build educational relationships with those countries.

On the continuum of being subjected to government regulations, on one hand, and being encouraged to be resourceful and creative in generating more revenues, as well as enhancing their international status, on the other hand, more and more universities worldwide exhibit signs of entrepreneurial spirit. Such entrepreneurial efforts are encouraging many higher education institutions to vary their funding sources and accordingly reduce their dependence on the government, and act more independently in a global higher education network.

## 4 Increased Diversity Versus Harmonization

Government-induced mission differentiation of various-type higher education institutions has been an inevitable policy accompanying the massification of most higher education systems in the last fifty years (Douglass et al. 2009;

Guri-Rosenblit 2011; Guri-Rosenblit et al. 2007; Teichler 2009). At the same time, there exists in the last decades a growing tendency to harmonize higher education systems and make them more flexible for enabling students, academic faculty and programs to move freely beyond national boundaries. Most notably is the Bologna Process in Europe, followed nowadays also beyond Europe (de Wit and Hunter 2014; Teichler 2009).

Mission differentiation enables to assign different roles to various higher education institutions, and to develop suitable budgeting formulas that suit their missions and appropriate infrastructures. For instance, there are currently 33 different categories for classifying over 5000 higher education institutions in the USA by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching 2014). Nine different categories exist in the Carnegie Classification just for universities that grant doctorates.

Altbach argues that developing countries need to differentiate the missions of higher education institutions in their postsecondary system. Without an appropriate system, which would vary according to national requirements, research universities could not fully flourish in these countries (Altbach 2013).

Obviously, the institutional missions of different-type higher education institutions vary immensely. The need to adopt an international policy forces each university to clearly define its national and international missions. Being a world-class-university or aiming at becoming a world-class-university requires totally different infrastructures and operational strategies, as compared to a conventional university which operates mainly in its national milieu. Being a public university differs meaningfully from operating as a private institution; and being a campus university that teaches a few thousands of students differs from being a distance teaching university, that enrolls dozens of thousands, or even over a million students.

Each country has shaped the structure of its higher education system on unique underlying premises that seemed to fit best its political and societal needs. Multiple academic cultures flourished within the different states that have been manifested through diverse access policies, plural study tracks to a wide range of diplomas and degrees of different lengths and reputation, and a wide spectrum of different types of tertiary and higher education institutions (Guri-Rosenblit 2011).

De Wit and Hunter assert that with the flagship program of the European Union, ERASMUS, created in 1987 and the European Association for International Education founded in 1989 in Amsterdam, Europe has embarked on a new path of harmonization and internationalization (de Wit and Hunter 2014). Two rationales have driven the involvement of Europe in internationalization: the development of a united Europe and European competitiveness with the rest of the world (ibid.). Many European Commission policies since the late 1980s were driven by a powerful vision of a united Europe, of equal access to higher education, and of international education as a core activity in the curriculum, not only for personal development, but as a way to build a better world. It was against this backdrop that the Bologna Declaration was signed in 1999. The Bologna process was conceived and developed well because of the extremely positive experience and influence of



cooperation under Erasmus, hailed as one of the most ever successful European initiatives. The emerging Higher Education Area not only created an external identity for European higher education institutions, but it also generated a strong interest for the new instruments and models in other parts of the world regions, even though they may not always have been fully implemented yet across Europe.

It is of tremendous importance that each higher education institution should define its unique missions and operational goals vis-à-vis the structure of the higher education system in which it operates, and its international aspirations. Clearly, the operation of higher education systems, as well as individual higher education institutions in an international setting requires higher education institutions to coordinate and harmonize their operation through the creation of common academic currencies, regulatory collaborative frameworks and efficient quality control mechanisms.

## 5 Competition Versus Collaboration

Higher education institutions worldwide act today simultaneously on themes of competition and cooperation (Peterson 2014). In the world of higher education, as elsewhere, one cannot avoid competition, be it the diversification of budget resources, the recruitment of high quality faculty, and the appeal to either good students or well-paying students. The rapid rise of private higher education, both non-profit and for-profit, has become a global phenomenon capturing 30 % of the student population and enhancing greatly competition in higher education (de Wit and Hunter 2014). New forms of higher education, such as the massive open online courses (MOOCs), being hailed as a new game changer, contribute as well to the competition between higher education institutions in an international setting.

Side by side with the growing competition in the higher education arena, there is also a growing tendency of cooperation between higher education institutions. Successful cooperation holds a great potential for generating additional resources, recruiting new student clienteles, and enabling collaborative ventures to flourish. Many international bodies encourage, and even condition funding of research projects by forcing collaboration between several higher education institutions, preferably from different countries.

There are three major strategies that higher education institutions can adopt in responding to the growing competition: to strengthen their relative advantages and demonstrate excellence in specific areas; to collaborate with other competing institutions in an attempt to reduce the competitive risk; and to extend their operation beyond local and national boundaries to international markets (Guri-Rosenblit 2011, 2013).

Partnerships, if they are successful, create greater strengths. The basic underlying idea behind cooperation is that the *whole* may be greater than the *sum of its parts*. The synergy that comes from collaboration can often yield benefits well beyond those originally envisioned. A failure to collaborate results often in an

unnecessary duplication of efforts and in ineffective investments of scarce resources. But the fact is that successful collaborations are immensely difficult to achieve and sustain. Many failures are reported in the relevant literature. Many collaborative ventures turn to be more fanfare than reality, and those that have been implemented successfully did not always turn out as intended.

In fact, many collaborative ventures produce something different from the originally stated goals, sometimes for the better, and sometimes for the worse. However, it is of tremendous importance for higher education institutions to widen their collaborative agreements, both with universities situated in their national jurisdictions, and even more with higher education institutions or higher education systems beyond their national boundaries. It is also vital for universities to strengthen their ties with the corporate and business worlds. Successful collaborations bear a huge potential for creating a sound financial base for the future well being of universities.

Unlike the Anglo-Saxon countries which have adopted an explicit competitive approach to the internationalization of higher education, most of the continental European countries until the last decades seemed to pursue a different approach, which is more cooperative in nature. According to van der Wende (2001), this may be explained from a political and a value-based perspective. In many European countries, free access to higher education has been seen as an established right, which conflicts with the view of higher education as a commodity to be traded on a world market. The rationale to compete internationally had been absent, or even undesirable, in many European countries, such as France, Italy and Germany until the late 1990s. Where higher education funding has been virtually completely funded by the state, no fees were charged to students, and limited autonomy was granted to institutions, there were few incentives and no real options for higher education institutions in these countries to compete internationally. Not surprisingly, most continental European countries pursued, until the start of the 21st century, a cooperative approach to internationalization, which in terms of international learning and experience is compatible with the traditional and cultural values of European academia.

This has changed with the Bologna process. One of the major goals of the Bologna Process has been not only to consolidate and harmonize the European higher education systems, but also to enhance the international competitiveness of European higher education, mainly vis-à-vis the American higher education (Guri-Rosenblit et al. 2007; Teichler 2009). Such a goal promotes competitiveness in the continental European countries. Furthermore, there is already a competitive market in many European countries, enhanced by the proliferation of many private providers, mainly in niche areas, such as business administration, international law, computer science. This bottom-up expansion of private higher education in Europe took place because some countries were unable to meet the rising demand for studies in attractive areas of high market demand.

It is of great importance that each higher education institution should clearly define its actual and potential partners for collaboration, as well as its actual and potential competitors related both to academic programs and research.

## 6 Intellectual Property Versus Intellectual Philanthropy

Two contrasting trends are apparent in the field of knowledge generation in the last decades, and both trends have been enhanced by the knowledge revolution through the emergence of the digital technologies. Many countries have defined in the last decades stringent copyright regulations and invested great efforts in registering patents. A new ‘cyber law’ field has been born to deal with intellectual property issues in the Internet. At the same time, an intriguing movement has started advocating open source policies, and this movement is gaining momentum in an accelerated pace in the last 15 years (e.g.—MIT’s Open Courseware, MOOCs, and many open educational resources projects), enhancing the trend of intellectual philanthropy in the world of academic teaching (Guri-Rosenblit 2010).

The Open Source movement, which is based on the technological infrastructure of the Internet, provides an illuminating example of collaboration among a growing number of higher education institutions. Clearly, more open access to sources of scholarly information, libraries, and software codes benefits all participants in higher education, but most particularly it benefits teaching and research in those countries that suffer from severe shortages in adequate academic manpower and research facilities.

Within the academic community there are currently many initiatives widening the open source usage all over the world (Altbach 2014; Biltzer and Schroder 2006; Guri-Rosenblit 2010). Many higher education institutions create open source infrastructures following the MIT Open Courseware initiative which started in 1999. Such open source frameworks enable to access instructional resources and academic courses in a plethora of areas. Another area in which the open source in academia flourishes relates to research products. Many funded research products are put available on the Internet. One of the most influential initiatives in the open source movement took place in academic publishing. There are currently a handful of open access journals where full-text articles are available for free online. Still, most of the journals publish just the abstracts of the articles, and charge a fee, either to individual users or to libraries, to access the full texts.

MOOCs are the latest effort to harness information technology for higher education. One aspect of the MOOCs movement has not been yet fully analysed—who controls the knowledge? Altbach argues that the MOOCs constitute a type of an academic neo-colonialism (Altbach 2014). Neither knowledge, nor pedagogy are neutral. They reflect the academic traditions, methodological orientations, and teaching philosophies of particular academic systems. MOOCs are largely an American effort, and the majority of courses available so far come from universities in US and other western countries. For the most part, the MOOCs’ content is based on the American academic experience and pedagogical ideas. The main providers of MOOCs are also located in the technologically advanced countries. Others, in diverse and less developed regions of the world, are joining the MOOC bandwagon, but it is likely that they will be using technology, pedagogical ideas and much of the content developed elsewhere. In this way, the online courses threaten to exacerbate

the worldwide influence of Western academe, bolstering its higher education hegemony.

Universities, as well as other higher education institutions, should clearly define where do they stand in relation to enacting copyright regulations related to the publishing of their academic faculty and their research products, and in which domains do they join and enhance the open source movement.

## 7 Concluding Remarks

The internationalization of higher education requires a significant shift in the operation of higher education systems, as well as of individual higher education institutions. Operating in a most complex world, policy makers at the national level of higher education, as well as leaders of universities and other higher education institutions have to handle concurrently contrasting trends, and define their missions and operational strategies accordingly. The increased focus on international collaborative ventures, the growing link between internationalization, research and employability require the rethinking of the roles and responsibilities of higher education institutions within national borders and beyond.

In acknowledging the great benefits of the internationalization of higher education, leaders of higher education at the system level or institutional level should be aware to the fact that the internationalization process carries on also possible adverse consequences, such as uneven benefits for diverse types of higher education institutions and particular risks for some institutions. In a relatively recent ‘Call for Action’ published by the International Association of Universities for *Affirming Academic Values in Internationalization of Higher Education*, higher education institutions are urged to clearly define the goals of their internationalization process: “As institutions develop their internationalization strategies, they should be clear and transparent about why they are undertaking a particular initiative, how it relates to their academic mission and values, and what mechanisms can be put in place to avoid possible negative consequences” (International Association of Universities 2012). The leaders of each higher education system in any given national jurisdiction, as well as the leaders of each higher education institution, have to interpret internationalization in the specific context of the structure and contextual setting of their operation.

This paper focused on five contrasting trends which characterize the internationalization of higher education. Higher education institutions are forced today to navigate between these contrasting trends. They do not have the privilege of choosing one or the other, but rather have to find a delicate and subtle balance between these opposing trends. On the basis of the five contrasting trends, which were presented in this paper, each higher education institution has to define today its functioning in its national context and in the international higher education network; the extent of its institutional autonomy in the framework of its national higher system; its unique role in the diversified higher education systems in which it

operates; its competing parties and its potential collaborators; as well as its policy towards intellectual property and intellectual philanthropy. The characterization of each higher education institution, as well as of a higher education system as a whole, can be marked on a continuum on which the contrasting trends are located, as outlined below. Such a description might depict the unique cluster of each higher education institution, as well as characterize the overall nature of national higher education systems, in relation to the contrasting trends which were discussed in this paper.

Contrasting trends		
Serving national priorities	?	Operating within an international setting
Government steering	?	Institutional autonomy
Increased diversity	?	Harmonization policies
Competition	?	Collaboration
Intellectual property	?	Intellectual philanthropy

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